

Request for Proposal Number 03-73273-000 Informing Materials

Prospective Proposers Questions

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Prospective proposers should monitor the Department of Mental Health (DMH) website for additional information periodically. Prospective proposers submitting a Letter of Intent will automatically receive update information. The updates will be sent to the contact person identified in the Letter of Intent.
- Prospective proposers suggested two additional items be added to the RFP Data Library: DMH Information Notice No. 03-05 and samples of the brochures the mental health plans (MHPs) are currently using. These items have been added to the Data Library. In addition, the DMH Information Notice No. 03-05 can be found at: <http://www.dmh.ca.gov/DMHDocs/default.asp?view=notices>. DMH encourages prospective proposers to search the Internet as many MHPs have their brochures posted on their respective websites. Some MHPs also have their services posted at: www.networkofcare.org.

Written Questions Submitted by January 5, 2004

- 1. Is the DMH currently working with any other PR, advertising or design firms? If so, who and which projects are they working on?**

DMH is not currently contracting with any public relations, advertising or design firms.

- 2. Will you provide a list of all firms submitting questions/attending the pre-proposal conference?**

Yes, it is the intention of DMH to post the names of the firms or individuals participating in the Voluntary Pre-proposal Conference on January 9, 2004, as well as posting the questions submitted in writing by the deadline (no later than 4:00 p.m. January 5, 2004).

- 3. Please confirm that this is the first time this type of RFP has been issued.**

Yes, this is the first time DMH issue a Request for Proposal for the Scope of Work described in RFP number 03-73273-000.

- 4. On page 10 it states that between March 24, 2004 and June 20,**

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2004, \$500,000 must be spent. Based on our understanding of the RFP, this means that all materials will need to be created, translated, reviewed by stakeholders, approved and printed/produced within this 3-month timeframe. Please confirm that this is DMH's intent and please explain the internal approval process.

For clarification purposes, the \$500,000 is the maximum amount available for the first contract year, but does not represent the amount that MUST be spent. The contract terms on page 10 indicate that the first contract year, "begins March 24, 2004 and expires June 30, 2004." It is the intent of DMH that by June 15, 2004, the successful Contractor would have developed the informing materials, as specified in Exhibit A entitled, "Scope of Work," Section 2. In addition to what is stated in question 4, the successful Contractor is expected to field-test the materials in order to ensure that the design, format, and content of the informing materials are written and presented in a manner that is easily understood by the Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

The finished products for the informing materials will have to be approved by DMH Management. DMH will probably consult with the State Department of Health Services.

- 5. On page 19, under Section 7, the RFP requests a timeline and overview of activities to take place. Will the DMH be providing detailed information on the type of materials it would like developed and the quantities or is the DMH looking for the bidder to submit recommendations? If DMH will be providing the information, when and where can it be accessed?**

It is the opinion of DMH that the RFP is complete. The RFP provides the necessary information for a prospective proposer to submit his/her bid. According to the RFP, DMH expects the successful Contractor to develop "informing materials, including brochures, provider directories, and annual notification notices that incorporates the requirements specified in the contract between the DMH and the MHPs, related sections of Title 9, CCR, and the new requirements at Title 42, CFR, Section 438.10." Part III, Section G. 7 provides an opportunity for proposers to be creative and tell DMH the "when," "how," and "who." For example, given the specific deadlines and Scope of Work, proposers are expected to identify the steps the proposer will take, the equipment, methodology, and staff necessary to complete the Scope of Work on a timely manner.

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- 6. Cost quotes will be largely contingent on the types of materials and the quantities developed. How will the DMH handle variances in bid amounts versus changes they may choose to make after the award of the contract?**

The Scope of Work does not require any reproduction of the informing materials for distribution to the Medi-Cal beneficiaries. DMH does not expect the prospective proposers to take these quantities into account in the development of the cost proposal.

Following the posting of the Notice of Intent to Award, DMH reserves the right to negotiate with the successful bidder any redistribution of costs within the budget deemed necessary by DMH in order to better achieve the program goals (Part III, Section L. of RFP). Any changes in the dollar amounts after the contract award will be governed by availability of funds, State law, rules, and/or guidelines on such changes.

- 7. We are assuming that the DMH will be looking for the contractor to handle all printing, please confirm.**

No. DMH expects to receive only working drafts and master copies of final products. DMH and the MHPs will be responsible for the duplication/printing of the final products.

- 8. Please confirm that there are no DVBE requirements.**

DMH is not participating in the Disable Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) program in the Request for Proposal number 03-73273-000 entitled, "Informing Materials."

- 9. How many meetings does the DMH anticipate the contractor participating in with key stakeholders?**

DMH does not have a set number of meetings the successful Contractor must attend. However, DMH expects the successful Contractor to "attend planning meetings conducted by DMH in Sacramento and two (2) stakeholder meetings comprised of representatives of the MHPs, CMHDA, clients and family members, the CCAC, and other stakeholder groups as directed by DMH" (Addendum 2, dated January 13, 2004). CMHDA is the California Mental Health Directors

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Association. CCAC is the DMH Cultural Competence Advisory Committee.

10. In Section A, paragraph 5; please identify the 13 threshold languages.

DMH Information Notice No. 03-05 defines a threshold language as "... a language that has been identified as the primary language, as indicated on the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS), of 3,000 beneficiaries or five percent of the beneficiary population, whichever is lower, in an identified geographic area..." The notice identifies the following threshold languages: Armenian, Cantonese, Cambodian, Farsi, Hmong, Korean, Mandarin, Other Chinese (in terms of written materials, other Chinese means "simplified Chinese"), Russian, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Please be aware that the threshold languages may change this year.

11. In Section A, paragraph 5; is there a target reading level?

The contract between DMH and the MHPs, Title 9, California Code of Regulations (CCR) Division 1, Chapter 11, and the new federal Medicaid Managed Care regulations do not specify a reading level. Title 42, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 438.10(b) provides that the informing must be in a "manner and format that may be easily understood." DMH expects the proposer to identify the target reading level based on an assessment of needs.

12. In Section A, paragraph 5 what is the preferred tool of the DMH to determine readability; Gunning Fog Index, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Score, Flesch Reading Ease Score, Other?

DMH does not have a preference. DMH expects the proposer to identify the readability level based on an assessment of needs and the proposer's expertise in this area.

13. What are the required alternative formats? Braille, L[I]arge font, very low literacy (what grade level), audiotape, speech enabled website, others?

DMH expects the proposer to identify and propose formats based on assessment of beneficiary needs. DMH does not expect the proposer to include Braille in his/her proposal. DMH does expect the proposer to include other alternative formats for the visually impaired.

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- 14. In Section A, paragraph 5, is field-testing to be completed in only English? The threshold languages? In alternative formats?**

The RFP does not have language requirements for the successful Contractor to field-test the informing materials. DMH does expect the proposers to consider the costs and effectiveness of the informing materials.

- 15. In Section A, paragraph 5, does the DMH have a required field-testing methodology or is the Contractor responsible for determining the most appropriate method?**

DMH does not require a specific methodology to field-test the informing materials. Instead, Part III, Section G.7 provides an opportunity for prospective proposers to be creative and tell DMH how the proposer intends to produce the finished product specified in the Scope of Work, including the methodologies the prospective proposer will draw upon.

- 16. In Section B, paragraph 1 please confirm that the fixed price budget allocation described is designed to include the following services:**

- a. Contractor management staff
- b. Contractor oversight staff
- c. Material development
- d. Translation
- e. Field-testing
 - i. In English
 - ii. In each threshold language
 - iii. In alternative formats
- f. Alternative Formats
 - i. Braille
 - ii. Large font
 - iii. Low literacy
 - iv. Audio tape
 - v. Speech enabled website
 - vi. Others
- g. Production, packaging, and delivery of sample materials requested by, or authorized by, the DMH.

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The cost proposal identifies the “ALL-INCLUSIVE cost of the project,” taking into account the Scope of Work, the Work Plan, and Time Schedules. All cost of all items listed in the question must be included in the cost proposal; however, with respect to the items listed under items e and f, the RFP does not have specific requirements regarding the languages to be field-tested or alternative formats. The prospective proposers should not include Braille versions of the informing materials. DMH is not requiring audiotapes or a speech enabled website as part of the alternative formats.

- 17. Given the significant reduction in reimbursement after contract year one (1), please list the responsibilities that will be required of the Contractor in contract year (2) and three (3).**

As provided in the Scope of Work, during the second (2) and third (3) contract years, the successful Contractor is expected to: “a) collaborate with DMH, MHPs, client and family members, CMHDA, the Cultural Competency Advisory Committee and other stakeholders in reviewing, evaluating, and annually updating the informing materials; and b) complete and submit updated informing materials to DMH by June 1, 2005 and June 1, 2006.”

- 18. What agency is responsible for the production of materials developed as part of this procurement?**

DMH understands the question to mean what agency is responsible for the reproduction/printing of the informing materials once the informing materials are ready for distribution to the Medi-Cal beneficiaries. DMH and the MHPs will be responsible for reproducing/printing the informing materials once these are ready for distribution to the Medi-Cal beneficiaries. DMH and the MHPs will arrange for reproduction and printing by individuals or organizations, probably after the first year's work of the successful contractor is completed. Thus, DMH must receive a final product that would allow DMH to retain and revise the informing materials as needed.

- 19. Does the DMH require regular reports? If yes, does the State have a desired format for reports(s) and/or requirements for specific data elements/information? Can the State provide any sample reports?**

DMH will not require formal reports as part of the RFP. However, DMH expects to receive drafts of work in progress and other status information on an on-going basis. DMH does not have a specific format. Section III, Section G does provide

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an opportunity for the prospective proposer to tell DMH how the proposer intends to deliver the Scope of Work of the RFP.

20. Will DMH require a specific file format for soft copy deliverables?

DMH and MHPs will be responsible for reproducing/printing the informing materials. DMH expects to have full ownership of the materials produced and to modify the materials as needed. Thus, DMH expects to receive soft copies of the informing materials as follows: 1) the provider directory in Microsoft Excel and 2) the brochure in Microsoft Word. The brochure may also be provided in PSD format for Adobe Photoshop as an additional format.

21. Does DMH anticipate any impact to its budget and/or availability of funds based on the s[S]tate's current budget crisis?

The \$500,000 authorized for the deliverables specified in contract year one (1) was included in the State Fiscal Year (FY) Budget 2003/04. DMH anticipates that the \$50,000 for contract years two (2) and three (3) respectively, will be included in the base budget for FY 2004/05 and 2005/06. However, the state is going through difficult fiscal times and the contract will be subject to the availability of funds.

22. Would the State consider adding an enhancements section to the RFP, which would allow potential contractors to address cost savings and/or process improvement proposals?

No.

Questions on January 9, 2004

23. What is the purpose of the brochure?

It notifies the Medi-Cal beneficiaries about the mental health services available and how to access those services and informs beneficiaries of their rights in relation to the MHP and its providers.

24. The RFP states that, "reimbursement for travel and per diem must not exceed amounts paid to the State's non-represented employees." Is this travel cost part of the \$600,000?

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Yes. The travel cost is part of the \$600,000 maximum budget. Therefore, prospective proposers should take travel cost into account when developing the cost proposal.

25. How often is the successful contractor expected to meet? Is there an anticipated level of travel?

Please refer to the response to question number 9.

26. The printing of the materials is out of the Scope of Work. Does DMH expect the prospective proposer to suggest/specify number of colors and number of pages for the brochure, being that the current brochure is only approximately five pages?

Yes. DMH expects the proposer to identify and suggest the design, number of pages and colors to be used based on the proposer's assessment of needs, taking into account the DMH will retain, reproduce and revise the informing materials as needed. Please note that it is unlikely that DMH will be able to print the final products in color.

27. On page 19, the RFP requires a timeline as part of the Work Plan and Time Schedule. A second timeline is required on page 20. Can DMH provide a distinction between the two timelines?

In response to the timeline requirement on page 19, DMH expects the proposer to submit a logic model, outcome sequence chart, a Gantt chart or a similar table or chart with a timeline that indicate benchmark steps and actions toward project completion. In response to the project narrative requirement on page 20, DMH expects a narrative description of the project. The two sections must be consistent.

28. Why is DMH asking for two Work Plans, one on page 19 and another one as attachment 3?

The attachments on the checklist are not intended to indicate how the proposer must structure the proposal. The purpose of the checklist is to allow the proposer and DMH to check off all the components of the proposal. Therefore, the Work Plan does not need to be presented as an attachment, but has to be in the proposal in a way that can be easily identified.

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- 29. Will an analysis of the Data Library give the prospective proposer an idea of the content of the brochure? Will the analysis give the prospective proposer an idea on how to quantify the pages for the brochure?**

A thorough analysis of the information in the Data Library, in particular the DMH/MHP contract, Title 9, CCR, Division 1, Chapter 11, and Title 42, CFR, Chapter IV, Subchapter C, Part 438, will provide the prospective proposer with an idea of the content of informing materials. The sample MHP brochures that have been added to the Data Library will give the prospective proposer an idea of the MHP-specific information that may be necessary. DMH views the Evidence of Coverage brochures issued by California's commercial health plans as a better model for the final products than the current MHP brochures, although content will not be directly comparable.

- 30. Is it permissible to include a title page between the cover page and the table of contents?**

Yes.

- 31. Who is the audience/population?**

Medi-Cal beneficiaries are the audience for the materials that will be produced through this RFP.

- 32. Will the provider directory be county specific, including those providers that were part of phase 2 of the Consolidation of Managed Care?**

Yes. MHPs are obligated to have a county-specific provider directory. The successful Contractor will be responsible for collaborating with all 55 MHP to produce the directories. Issues involved in the development of the directories will include federal and state requirements for describing the services available through the providers; including language capability; and efficient handling of issues related to the language needs of the reader of the directory. Proposers keep this in mind when developing the design.

- 33. Will it be possible for the successful Contractor to design one (1) major brochure and 55 smaller ones?**

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No. However, the single brochure for each MHP may include separate sections for MHP-specific information and for general information.

34. Will DMH require a speech enabled website?

No. Please refer to the response to question number 16.

35. What are the DMH expectations as far as presentation is concerned?

DMH expects the proposer to advise DMH on a design that is best for the Medi-Cal beneficiaries, within the stated budget. Keep in mind that given the State's fiscal climate, DMH will be operating under a limited budget for reproduction and printing.